

Message Text

SECRET

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51

ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5167

INFO SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE

USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC HONOLULU IMMEDIATE

USSAG NKP THAILAND IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

S E C R E T SAIGON 4791

EXDIS-MIL ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

NOFORN

WARNING--SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND METHODS

INVOLVED/NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION.

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2 DECLASSIFICATION DATE IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE.

TAGS: MOPS VS

SUBJECT: HIGHLIGHTS OF NVA OFFENSIVE--SUMMARY FOR PERIOD

ENDING NOON APRIL 11.

1. GENERAL.

THE BATTLE FOR XUAN LOC ENTERED ITS THIRD DAY WITH THE GVN STILL IN FIRM CONTROL OF THE CITY, AND WITH ELEMENTS OF A GVN ARMORED TASK FORCE FIGHTING DOWN ROUTE 1 TOWARD THE CITY. THE 52D REGT OF THE 18TH ARVN DIVISION NOW HAS ALL THREE BATTALIONS AROUND THE JUNCTION OF ROUTES 1 AND 20, AND IS IN CONTROL OF THAT JUNCTION. GVN FORCES HAVE INFLICTED HEAVY CASUALTIES ON THE 275TH NVA REGT IN THE

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TAN AN AREA. THE DELTA SITUATION REMAINS UNCHANGED. MORALE IN

THE DELTA IS HOLDING STEADY, AND HAS SHOWN SOME IMPROVEMENT SINCE THE INITIAL SHOCKS RESULTING FROM THE LOSSES OF MR-1 AND MR-2.

2. MR-3.

THE BATTLE FOR XUAN LOC CONTINUED TO DOMINATE THE COMBAT SCENE IN MR-3 AND VIET-NAM. THE 43D AND 48TH REGTS OF THE 18TH ARVN DIVISION, ALONG WITH THE 82D RANGER BN, REMAIN IN FIRM CONTROL OF THE CITY, DESPITE SUSTAINED HEAVY NVA ATTACKS. AN NVA ATTACK ON ROUTE 1 WAS REPULSED BY THE 322ND ARMORED TASK FORCE AND THE NVA BROKE OFF THE CONTACT. THE 322D IS REPORTED TO HAVE BROKEN THROUGH ONE ROAD BLOCK AND TO HAVE LINKED UP WITH THE 52D REGT OF THE 18TH DIV,

WHICH IS PRESENTLY POSITIONED ASTRIDE THE JUNCTION OF ROUTES 1 AND 20.

ALL THREE BATTALIONS OF THE 52D ARE PRESENTLY LOCATED AT THE JUNCTION AND HAVE APPARENTLY CONCEDED ROUTE 20 NORTH OF ROUTE 1 TO THE NVA. THE GVN FORCES INTEND TO CONTINUE TO WORK THEIR WAY TOWARD ANOTHER ROAD BLOCK JUST WEST OF XUAN LOC, TO CLEAR IT, AND TO REINFORCE THE XUAN LOC DEFENDERS.

THE CITY ITSELF TOOK SOME 2000 ROUNDS OF MIXED ARTILLERY, ROCKET AND MORTAR DURING THE NIGHT OF APRIL 10/11, FOLLOWED BY A RENEWAL OF HEAVY GROUND, TANK AND ARTILLERY ATTACKS DURING THE MORNING OF APRIL 11. THE GVN HAS BEEN PUTTING HEAVY AIR STRIKES IN AGAINST THE ATTACKERS OF XUAN LOC. NVA UNITS IDENTIFIED AS BEING INVOLVED IN THE ATTACK NOW INCLUDE THE 164TH REGT OF THE 7TH NVA DIVISION, IN ADDITION

TO THE 812TH REGT (6TH NVA DIV) AND THE 266TH REGT(341ST NVA DIV) PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED. NVA UNITS INVOLVED ARE TAKING SUBSTANTIAL CASUALTIES.

THE 275TH REGT OF THE 5TH NVA DIVISION HAS SUFFERED HEAVY CASUALTIES IN FORAYS INTO THE TAN AN AREA. ELEMENTS OF THE 7TH ARVN DIVISION INTERCEPTED THE 275TH WITHDRAWING FROM THE APRIL 9 ATTACK ON TAN AN AND INFLECTED 150 KILLED. IN ANOTHER ACTION, TERRITORIALS REPULSED, WITH HEAVY AIR AND ARTILLERY SUPPORT, AN ATTACK IN THEIR POSITION EAST OF THU THUA APRIL 10, LEAVING 48 NVA DEAD.

3. MR-4.

THE MILITARY SITUATION IN THE DELTA REMAINS UNCHANGED. MORALE, WHILE STILL NOT HIGH, HAS IMPROVED SOMEWHAT FROM THE PERIOD DURING THE WORST DAYS OF THE GVN COLLAPSE IN MRS 1 AND 2. THE WORST

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PROBLEM AT THE PRESENT TIME IS THE HIGH RATE OF DESERTIONS FROM THE RF BATTALIONS RECENTLY UPGRADED TO ARVN. SIGNS OF DISSATISFACTION WITH THE LEVEL OF AMERICAN AID AND WITH GVN LEADERSHIP CONTINUE TO MANIFEST THEMSELVES.

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